# BABY REINDEER EPISODE FIVE

Created & Written by

Richard Gadd

## 1 BLACK. VOICEMAIL.

The sound of a thousand voicemails. Building to a crescendo. Behind which we hear the sound of the answering machine--

VOICEMAIL -- received Sunday 23rd at 2.26pm--

BEEP! Martha's voice penetrates through. She has a calm, poised and moderately direct energy about her now. Staying just the right side of threatening.

MARTHA Here's the toss of the coin for me-and I'm going to be quite frank with you here, now, okay? Because I've just had some lunch-- yeah? But when you mentioned my name in that police station -- and I got wrapped for that -- that was not good enough. Because rumours in a town of morons are the death of professionals, like me--(beat) That's like me going to the head of comedy -- acting, writing, whatever -and making waves for you professionally -- and believe me, I could have went and made waves --

BEEP! Message deleted. The sound of a dial tone is heard, fading into the darkness. When--

# 2 INT. POLICE STATION, MAIN RECEPTION - DAY. (JANUARY 2016)

BOOM! Donny enters. The door is heavy and echoes as it clangs shut. A Police Constable called DANIELS (30) - inexperienced, \* unwelcoming - stands at the front desk.

DANIELS Can I help you--?

DONNY

Yeah, uh--(beat) I would like to, report, something--

DANIELS What would you like to report?

DONNY Right, well-- I don't know how to tell you this, but, I'm--(beat) -- I'm getting stalked--

Daniels stares. Somewhere between doubt and not caring.

DANIELS By a man or a woman--?

DONNY

A woman.

DANIELS And have you had a sexual relationship with this woman--?

DONNY No. She's-- quite a bit older than me...

DANIELS Age is generally not a factor we consider--

DONNY No, of course... I can assure you though-- I-- I absolutely haven't--

Daniels stares. This is already excruciating.

DANIELS Can you give me a sense of some of the things she is doing--?

DONNY Well, she attacked my girlfriend the other day...

DANIELS Yes, well that is a concern...

Daniels goes to type into a nearby desktop computer.

DANIELS What's her name--?

DONNY Who, my girlfriend's name--?

DANIELS Yes, we'll have to speak to her--

Donny balks. His confidence suddenly diminishing.

DONNY

As in...?

DANIELS We'll have to bring her into the station and get her account of things-- maybe interview the both of you together...

Donny stares. Barely hiding his panic. Before backtracking.

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DONNY Well, it wasn't really-- a physical, fight, you know? More of a verbal confrontation-- type thing-

Daniels frowns. What is going on here? He turns away from the computer and goes back to addressing Donny.

DANIELS Okay, I think it might help if you go from the top. You say this woman is stalking you--?

DONNY Yes! She comes to my work-- to my house--

DANIELS Your house?

DONNY Yeah-- she just turned up one night -- and wouldn't leave...

DANIELS Has she been round since--?

DONNY No, she hasn't-- but she does sit at this bus stop on the street outside-- like, all the time...

Daniels nods gravely. Taking it in with concern.

DANIELS -- and if we went there now, would she be there--?

DONNY Oh, I, uh... I'm not sure, actually-

DANIELS I thought you said she was there all the time--?

DONNY No, she is, it's just that--(beat) -- well, the other day, I took her home...

DANIELS You took her home--?

DONNY

Yeah--

DANIELS You took your stalker home--?

DONNY

Yeah-- but only because it was cold and I-- you know-- felt bad for her-

DANIELS

Right.

Daniels stares at him. What is up with this guy? Donny grows flustered and tries to change tack.

DONNY Look, she sends me emails, like... all the time--

DANIELS Are any threatening towards you--?

DONNY Oh, I'm sure. I mean, let me just open a random one-

Donny opens up a random email from Martha and shows Daniels. It reads: "I jussthad an egg".

DANIELS I wouldn't say that's particularly threatening.

DONNY They're in here somewhere, I just need to-- sift through all the... (growing desperate) I mean, look her up on Google--! There's reams of information online-

DANIELS What kind of police officer would I be if I filed reports off Google--?

Donny sighs, exasperatedly.

DONNY Look, I'm really worried here... I think she needs help--

DANIELS How long has it been going on for?

DONNY Six months, maybe--

DANIELS Six months?!

Donny nods. Daniels stares in disbelief.

DANIELS Why did it take you so long to report it--?

Donny stands there. As the question sinks in. A small, flicker of panic. When, suddenly--

DONNNY (V.O.) This is the uncomfortable part of the story.

# 4 EXT. EDINBURGH, THE ROYAL MILE - DAY. (JULY 2013)

The Cranberries' 'Dreams' plays. Crashing us into the scene. The Edinburgh Fringe. Donny walks through Edinburgh with a hiker's backpack on. Prop suitcase in hand. Taking the place in. The street performers. The hustle and bustle. The energy.

> DONNY (V.O.) Growing up, the Edinburgh Festival was the stuff of dreams. School trips where we would all pile on the bus and travel down were some of the most exciting times I've ever had--

Donny is handed a flyer as he walks. Loving it all.

DONNY (V.O.) The capital just exploded into a rich palate of golden colours. Bright reds and oranges-- bagpipes, and drumbeats. It felt boundless and nostalgic and exhilarating-- as though the entire world's possibilities had shrunk down into this tiny city for the month--

# 5 **EXT. EDINBURGH, STREET - DAY.**

(JULY 2013)

Donny takes a left onto a lively street. Still with his backpack on and his suitcase in hand. As show signs are all erected around him and the festival takes shape. Terrible satirical show titles like:

"Punstoppable"- "My Dead Dad" - "InflammaTory" - "Drunk Hamlet" - "Men: Why Bother?" - "Left Leaning, Right Seeming" -Bohemian Crapsody: The One Woman Musical About INCONTINECE!"

> DONNY (V.O.) My imagination caught fire. I just had to come here one day. I had to write and perform and indulge my artistic excesses. Acting, writing, comedy-- whatever it took--(beat)

# 6 EXT. THE HOPPY, STREET - DAY.

Donny turns off the meadows and down some random streets as the hysteria of the Fringe starts to disappear. Donny looks up at his venue. It is a dump. An old man's pub.

> DONNY (V.O.) -- and so as I arrived at my venue that year on the outskirts of town-and spotted the peeling paint, the grubby windows-- the sticky floors and the stench of chip fat as I walked in--

# 7 INT. THE HOPPY, MAIN AREA - DAY. (JULY 2013)

Donny enters. Not a Fringe vibe at all. A few losers sit around staring into their pints while the football plays.

DONNY (V.O.) It felt like everything to me--

Donny smiles. Then makes his way to the bar. The Barmaid GWEN (50) - wry, unimpressed - is reading a trashy tabloid newspaper. Not the least bit interested. Not even looking up.

#### DONNY

Hi.

GWEN

Yo.

DONNY Can you tell me, where to go for the comedy--?

GWEN Performer or punter?

## DONNY

Performer.

Gwen looks up to check whether he is famous. Before returning to her paper.

GWEN Door over there. (JULY 2013)

Donny wanders over to the door and opens it. In the cupboard, amongst a mop and bucket, is a small, tin-can amp. Donny laughs, disbelievingly. Then wanders back over to Gwen.

DONNY Do you mean a different door, or--?

GWEN Plug it in in the corner, and shove the table to the side--

DONNY This is my stage? Here?! In with the main bar--?!

Gwen shrugs. Donny starts to panic.

DONNY I mean-- do the televisions stay on?!

GWEN

We mute.

DONNY And the punters?!

GWEN You can ask them to leave, if you'd like--?

DONNY Oh no, I can't do that! They're here twelve months a year, I'm only here one--(beat) Can you ask them to leave?

GWEN

No.

Pause. Donny swallows, his panic growing. He scans his eyes across the hard-looking faces of the customers.

DONNY Do they even want to see comedy--?

GWEN

Only one way to find out.

Donny starts wandering around the punters with his flyers.

DONNY (to a Punter) Comedy show starting in two minutes if you're interested?

The punter doesn't even look up. Donny moves on.

DONNY (to a different Punter) Comedy show in two minutes--?

PUNTER Tell us a joke?

DONNY I don't do jokes-- it's sort of, like, a deconstruction of stand-up--

The Punter bursts out laughing.

PUNTER

That is funny!

Donny walks back to the stage, fear-stricken.

DONNY (sotto) Well, this is going to be a fucking disaster...

Donny moves the table to the side and plugs in the amp. Before checking his watch. He turns to Gwen.

DONNY Okay, we had better begin--

Gwen raises the remote above her head and mutes the television without looking. The punters moan in unison. We hear - "FUCKING EDINBURGH FRINGE!" - amongst the moans.

DONNY Okay ladies and gentlemen, WELCOME TO THE COMEDY...!

Nobody cheers. In fact, nobody even looks up.

DONNY I'm going to go behind that wall there to change-- and when I shout out-- you all go mad and welcome me to the stage--(beat) How does that sound--?

One person whoops.

DONNY Great, one person--

A small titter.

DONNY Okay, here goes-- Donny darts behind the nearby wall. He pulls off his hoody and joggers, revealing a ridiculous sparkly onesie. He then puts on a wig and some massive star sunglasses. He then takes a big, deep breath, and shouts back into the pub--

> DONNY Please welcome to the stage... DONNY DUNN!

Donny comes out doing a big, arrogant introduction. Everyone stares on horrified, as Donny goes hell for leather. Whooping and hollering and bowing as though he is performing at a massive gig. When he finishes and wanders to the microphone.

> DONNY So my Mum died today...

Nothing. No laughter.

DONNY Nothing?! Really--?! It's funny opening a show like that when my Mum has just died... No? (beat) "Antithesis"--

Nothing. No laughter still. Donny perseveres by going into a nearby suitcase and taking out a puppet parrot.

DONNY Give me a cheer if you want to meet my friend Percy--?

Nothing. No cheers.

DONNY You're going to meet him anyway!

Donny starts an act where the ventriloquist is really bad at ventriloquism. He raises the puppet parrot.

DONNY "How are you today, Percy...?" (moving lips) "I'm good, thanks, you...?!"

PUNTER You can't move your lips if you're a ventriloquist!

DONNY THAT'S THE FUCKING JOKE--!

(JULY 2013)

#### INT. THE HOPPY, CORNER AREA - DAY. 8

Donny sits in the make-shift backstage area. Head in hands, mid-exhale. What an awful gig. He takes his hands away and looks at the bucket. A measly amount of change. He sighs.

> DONNY (V.O.) The shows were soul-crushingly awful. Most days I had to cancel due to nobody turning up--

#### 9 INT. THE HOPPY, MAIN AREA - DAY.

Donny is mid-routine. An anguished look on his face. Clearly bombing hard. As an audience of five watch on. Cringing.

> DONNY (V.O.) On busy nights, I would perform to audiences of five if I was lucky--

#### 10 INT. THE HOPPY, MAIN AREA - DAY.

A chaotic scene. Donny is up on stage, looking stressed.

DONNY (V.O.) This one time I had to end the show early when I was caught in the cross-hairs of a stag-do--

Two burly men have gate-crashed the stage and are trying to steal his various props and wigs.

> DONNY No! Please! I need them for the rest of the month--!

#### 11 EXT. EDINBURGH, MEADOWS - DAY.

Donny stands. With his flyers in his hands. Looking defeated. As a couple approach in the distance.

> DONNY (V.O.) Some days I stood not handing out any flyers in the hope nobody would come--

Donny smiles at them sheepishly as they pass--

#### 12 EXT. EDINBURGH, MEADOWS - DAY.

Donny sits. Eating a depressing sandwich. His flyers piled up on the step beside him.

(JULY 2013)

(AUGUST 2013)

(AUGUST 2013)

DONNY I was a week in and felt like the dregs of show-business. I questioned if I just packed up and went home whether anyone would notice-- whether anyone would care--

# 13 INT. THE HOPPY, MAIN AREA - DAY.

Donny carries a bucket back into the stage area to a smattering of applause from an embarrassed audience of four.

DONNY I'm going to be standing by the door with a bucket, for your donations-- just give what you think the show is worth-- thank you-

## 14 INT. THE HOPPY, ENTRANCE DOORS - DAY. (AUGUST 2013)

Donny stands with the bucket as all four audience members walk past him without dropping any money in. In fact, they barely acknowledge him. Donny forces a smile as they go.

When the final audience member passes him and Donny turns back into the bar. Gwen raises her eyebrows as Donny walks over. He turns the bucket over and empties out nothing.

GWEN

Ouch.

DONNY Better than yesterday I suppose.

GWEN What was yesterday?

DONNY A button and a condom.

Gwen laughs.

GWEN

Oh here, I've got something for you-

Gwen bends down and picks up something from behind the bar.

GWEN

Fell out someone's wallet yesterday. Yours if you want it? I know how much you artists love to schmooze...

Donny stares down. It is a card to the Edinburgh VIP members lounge. Donny looks back up at her and smiles.

#### 15 SCENE DELETED

#### 16 INT. VIP LOUNGE, MAIN AREA - NIGHT. (AUGUST 2013)

Donny stands at the bar. Taking the place in with awe. Drinking and grinning at everyone around. Unaware of how weird he looks. When his ears prick up--

Donny's interest is piqued by a nearby conversation around three metres away. Three men, twenty-odd, posh-looking. Led by a young man called BILLY (28) - the poshest of all.

> BILLY -- that's the thing, we had no idea it would ever work when we shot it --you know that scene with the tincan soldiers--?

Donny's eyes widen as he takes a sip and listens more.

BILLY

-- we shot that on a beach in Lancaster, using tin foil from catering -- we used so much of the stuff that Benji said he could feel his fillings coming out--

They all laugh. When Donny interrupts --

DONNY

Excuse me, sorry to interrupt, but did you work on-- Cotton Mouth?

BILLY

Yeah--

DONNY Oh my God, I fucking love that show! What did you do on it?!

BILLY I was on the writing staff--

DONNY Holy shit, man! Do I kiss your feet now, or--?

Donny laughs a little desperately. They all find him weird.

DONNY Look, I'm doing this show at the Hoppy Bar. Come down and see it if you can--

Donny hands the flyer over. Billy takes it and holds it up. Donny looking very obnoxious, with a terrible title.

BILLY "LOL-on Cancer"...

DONNY Yep-- great, title, huh--?

Donny laughs. Billy forces a smile.

BILLY

We'll try--

Donny smiles. Overly eager. An awkward pause ensues.

DONNY

So you guys seen anything decent --?

BILLY I'll see you later.

DONNY

Үер--

They all turn and leave abruptly. Donny cringes at himself as they go. When DARRIEN (55) - charming, camp, with a subtle charisma - approaches.

DARRIEN Wankers, aren't they--?

DONNY Yeah-- terrible first impression on my part, though...

DARRIEN Oh, shocking! You'll never work in the industry again.

DONNY Chance would be a fine thing...

They share a laugh. Donny nods at Billy.

DONNY See that bloke there?

DARRIEN

Yeah.

DONNY He wrote Cotton Mouth. Fucking amazing, you seen it--?

DARRIEN Bits and bobs. Not my thing.

DONNY Then, you're mental--(beat) DONNY (CONT'D) It should be illegal for people to be that young and that successful.

DARRIEN Want to slip poison in his drink?

DONNY Wow. That's dark. But yes.

They laugh.

DONNY Anyway, the actors made that show if you ask me--

DARRIEN Couldn't agree more.

DONNY Man. I hate that I care about his opinion...

Donny shakes his head at himself. A little morose.

DARRIEN What do you do--?

DONNY I'm a comedian when they laugh. A performance artist when they don't--

DARRIEN -- and how were they tonight?

DONNY They came for the art.

Darrien laughs. Pause.

DONNY I'm Donny by the way.

DARRIEN Darrien O'Connor.

DONNY

As in--?!

DARRIEN

Cotton Mouth.

DONNY

(beat) What?! But then-- who's--?!

15.

DARRIEN My writing assistant. Former writing assistant now I know he's stealing my job...

DONNY

Oh, my God, I'm so sorry! All that actor stuff-- merely banter-- I know who you are! The writing was the best bit about that show--!

DARRIEN Don't worry!

DONNY I mean, you just said you didn't like it--?!

# DARRIEN

I don't.

DONNY But... why do it then...?

DARRIEN I'm a televisual prostitute. I'll take whatever anyone gives me.

Darrien smiles a mildly flirtatious smile. Donny laughs awkwardly. Suddenly aware he might be hitting on him.

### DONNY

How about a failing comedian --?

They laugh together, then both take a drink simultaneously. As they drink, Donny catches eyes with Darrien who smiles.

17 SCENE DELETED.

## 18 SCENE DELETED.

# 19 INT. THE HOPPY, CORNER AREA - DAY.

(AUGUST 2013)

Donny is backstage changing into his sparkly onesie with a newfound resolve. Buoyed by the interaction last night.

DONNY (V.O.) I couldn't believe it. I had been here one week and already shaken hands with someone who had shaped the rhetoric of my childhood--(beat) DONNY (V.O.) (CONT'D) -- and for the first time this festival, I couldn't wait to get back out on stage and do it all over again--

Donny peers out. He sees his audience of two and smiles a self-pitying smile. But still remaining buoyant, he motions over to Gwen who raises the remote and mutes the television.

We hear people groaning and getting up to leave as Donny returns to his microphone backstage. Where he takes a deep breath and announces himself to the stage.

> DONNY Ladies and Gentlemen, please welcome to the stage-- the man who puts the LOL in Proprano-LOL--! (sotto) Will probably cut that bit... (beat) DONNY DUNN--!

Donny steps out and looks into his crowd. The same two audience members are there and Darrien. WHAT?!

Donny stalls upon seeing him. When, fuck it. He launches into the big intro again. Whooping and hollering and bowing and cheering. Before getting to the mic.

> DONNY So my Mum died today...

Everyone laughs. Even Donny is surprised by it.

DONNY I was going to cancel the gig, but I suppose this is what she would have wanted. Me to die with her--

Another big laugh. Even Gwen is watching. Wryly smiling.

DONNY Anyway, who wants to meet my friend Percy--?

The audience cheer. Very much going along with it. As Donny pulls up the puppet parrot on his arm.

DONNY "How are you today, Percy...?" (moving lips) "I'm good, thanks, you...?!"

The audience really laugh. Darrien is really enjoying it. Donny looks to him and smiles. Pleased with himself. Before--

# 20 INT. THE HOPPY, ENTRANCE DOORS - DAY. (AUGUST 2013)

Donny is standing with a bucket. The random couple drop coins and smile at him as they leave. Darrien drops in a twenty.

DONNY Jesus, a twenty--?!

DARRIEN I didn't get a goodbye last night, so I thought I would come get it now--

DONNY Oh, right, well... goodbye!

Darrien turns to go.

DONNY NO! No! I'm joking-- sorry...

Donny laughs awkwardly. Darrien studies him.

DARRIEN You're strange.

DONNY Am I? Shit--

DARRIEN Don't worry. I don't mind a bit of strange--

Donny smiles, a little self-consciously. When Darrien removes a card and hands it to Donny.

DARRIEN Let's meet up and talk. I think I might have a few pointers on how to take this show to the next level--

DONNY Yeah, great!

Donny smiles. Darrien gives him a nod and a smile.

DARRIEN Laterz, then.

DONNY Yeah-- laterz... cowboy...

Donny cringes at himself as Darrien turns and goes. He waits for him to disappear before exploding into a mini-celebration to himself. Dancing around in the doorway. When he catches eyes with Gwen and stops immediately.

(AUGUST 2013)

# 21 INT. THE HOPPY, MAIN AREA - DAY.

Donny and Darrien are in the pub. The place hasn't opened yet. Donny is on stage in his sparkly outfit, listening intently. Whilst Darrien sits at the front giving feedback.

DONNY (V.O.) Darrien became involved with the show for the next few weeks. Giving me advice on bits that were and weren't working. Rehearsing all kinds of hours to whip everything into shape--

# 22 SCENE DELETED.

# 23 INT. THE HOPPY, MAIN AREA - DAY. (AUGUST 2013)

Donny stands in the middle of the pub watching Darrien command a staff of workers to hang signs and move furniture.

DONNY (V.O.) -- soon the televisions were shut off and the chairs faced the right way-- and even the bar staff dismissed customers who dared to ask when the football was on--

GWEN We're not showing it today. Try the pub down the road--

Donny watches a random man walk out. Before turning his head back to the room and breaking out into a massive smile.

DONNY (V.O.) And the shows just flourished--

# 24 INT. THE HOPPY, MAIN AREA - DAY.

(AUGUST 2013)

A packed out crowd. An electric atmosphere. It feels like a proper venue now. Everyone smiling as Donny performs.

DONNY I suppose this is what she would have wanted. Me to die with her--

An absolutely massive laugh. Donny looks to Darrien in the front row who is smiling and nodding at him. Proud.

DONNY (V.O.) Then every night, I would go out with Darrien and live life like a celebrity in the main private members bar in town--

# 25 INT. VIP LOUNGE, CENTRE TABLE - NIGHT.

The camera circles around Donny and Darrien as they chat at a table. An array of half-drunk cocktails in front of them.

DONNY (V.O.)

-- drinking cocktails until the early hours-- talking endlessly about the show and what we were going to do with it when the festival was over--

DARRIEN

We need to get you performing in London-- I'll try and get you on at the West End or something-

DONNY Wow! Yeah! That would be great--!

# 26 INT. VIP LOUNGE, CENTRE TABLE - NIGHT. (AUGUST 2013)

A different night. The camera still circles seamlessly. But their outfits and drinks change on each spin.

DONNY (V.O.) Darrien was like someone I had never met before. A self-prescribed-

DARRIEN

Buddhist, polyamorous, pansexual--with a taste for the finer things in life--

# DONNY (V.O.)

He told me these mad stories of going to Thailand and swallowing these mushrooms which gave him divine healing-- and recounted the craziest sex stories I had ever heard--

### DARRIEN

It's hard to yell for help when you're chained to a radiator with a ball-gag in your mouth--!

Donny howls with laughter.

### DONNY (V.O.)

Within two weeks of knowing him, he had opened my eyes to the kind of excitement I didn't even know existed-- 19.

A different night. Different outfits. Different drinks. The camera circling and circling.

DARRIEN That's the big smoke for you. It holds the power of possibility--

DONNY (V.O.) London felt like the stuff of dreams. Sprawling. Exciting. Sexual, almost. Like I could feel the city calling me to it--

DARRIEN You'd suit it, you know. The capital. You'd wear it well.

Darrien takes a drink and smiles. A little flirtatiously. Donny smiles back. Barely containing his excitement.

> DONNY (V.O.) -- and as we sat in that private members bar and put the world to rights-- I felt like I was gliding on the winds of change. Like this man was dangling some keys to a secret club and all I needed to do was take his hand and let him guide me--

# 28 INT. VIP LOUNGE, TOILET CUBICLE - NIGHT. (AUGUST 2013)

Sudden normality. Darrien pushes Donny into the toilet.

DONNY What the hell are we doing in here?

DARRIEN Shhh! Shh! They patrol the toilets!

Darrien cuts a line of cocaine on the toilet roll dispenser. Donny stares unnerved but tries to play it cool. Darrien sniffs. Then stands and whispers to Donny, slightly manic.

> DARRIEN We need to get you writing scripts with me--

DONNY Yeah, that sounds -- amazing!

DARRIEN You're heading for a big moment here, in your life-- are you ready?

DONNY I'm ready for anything--

# DARRIEN

Good. Here--

Darrien hands Donny the note. Donny knows what he has to do. He gets on his knees and hesitatingly snorts a line.

# 29 BLACK.

DONNY (V.O.) But all good things come to an end. Darrien went back to London early, and I didn't hear from him for the rest of the festival--

# 30 INT. THE HOPPY, MAIN AREA - DAY. (AUGUST 2013)

Donny is performing to a packed out audience. He has a condom on his head. He is really smashing the gig.

> DONNY -- hey, if you think that's bad! I was so drunk I ended up putting the hairnet on my penis--!

A big laugh. When he looks to the empty seat Darrien used to sit in. Trying to swallow down how gutted he feels.

DONNY (V.O.) Maybe he was taking a break, or on holiday somewhere-- but it felt strange--

## 31 INT. THE HOPPY, MAIN AREA - DAY. (AUGUST 2013)

Donny stands in the middle of the bar. As it is packed away.

DONNY (V.O.) -- and as the televisions came back on and the football started to play-

# 32 EXT. EDINBURGH, STREET - DAY.

Donny walks back through the festival. Backpack on. As various workers take down the signs around him.

DONNY (V.O.) -- the flyers got binned-- and the posters came down-- I questioned whether it was some crazy dream. Whether it even happened at all-

#### 33 INT. DRAMA SCHOOL, STUDIO - DAY.

Donny is prancing around in a black leotard. He and another twenty or so students also in black are mimicking fire. A drama teacher, stands observing them at the side.

> DONNY (V.O.) In the months that followed, I went to acting school in Oxford. I remember when I got in after endless rounds of auditioning, I almost broke down crying with happiness--(beat) -- but following everything that had happened in Edinburgh, going back to a life of enforced learning seemed like a misstep--

Donny "fires" past Keeley who smiles at him. He smiles back, awkwardly. A frisson of something.

> DONNY (V.O.) -- and as I pranced around in a leotard, pretending to be fire--

#### INT. DRAMA SCHOOL, STUDIO - DAY. 34 (SEPTEMBER 2013)

Later that day. Donny is doing a vocal warm-up. Feeling utterly ridiculous as he hums in a stupid posture.

> DONNY (V.O.) -- or doing vocal warm-ups--

#### 35 INT. DRAMA SCHOOL, STUDIO - DAY. (SEPTEMBER 2013)

Later that day. Donny is flapping on the floor like a magpie. Feeling the same ridiculousness as he does it.

> DONNY (V.O.) -- or mimicking animals-- and basically doing anything other than fucking acting -- I felt one of those impossible to articulate feelings in my stomach--

#### 36 INT. DRAMA SCHOOL, CORRIDOR - DAY. (SEPTEMBER 2013)

Donny is sitting on a bench by himself. Eating a sandwich.

DONNY (V.O.) I missed Darrien. I missed the confidence he gave me. The feeling of relevancy. Of hope.

(SEPTEMBER 2013)

DONNY (V.O.) (CONT'D) That one day, my life might actually lead somewhere...

Donny opens his phone. He has messaged Darrien a few times: "Shall we catch up soon?" - "Thinking about the fest bro, such a blast, wasn't it?!" - "Hey man, you there?" He has got nothing back and so he sighs and re-pockets his phone.

> DONNY (V.O.) Now, a body in a sea of black-- I felt like a nobody again. Like I was shrinking from the world, just as I had developed a taste for it--

KEELEY (O.C.) Donny! Over here--!

Donny turns. About five of his fellow students are waving him over to join them in a cluster on the floor. Donny picks up his stuff and joins them. Smiling at Keeley as he does it.

# 37 INT. DRAMA SCHOOL, STUDIO - DAY. (NOVEMBER 2013)

Back in the drama studio. There is a student hysterically crying in the foetal position on the floor. Big, loud, horrendous sobs. The class sit in a circle around her.

We pan across the circle. Starting with the teacher who nods with faux deep, approval. Then through a couple of classmates who sit, enthralled. Until we pan to Donny. Utterly fucking dead inside. Lost in regret and contemplation.

When, suddenly-- his phone starts vibrating on the floor nearby. He breaks his attention from the circle and cranes to look. The screen flashes up with Darrien's name. Holy shit!

Donny looks up at his teacher who crosses her arms. Daring him to answer it and defy her. He thinks for a moment. Then--

DONNY I'm sorry! I've got to take this--

### 38 INT. DRAMA SCHOOL, CORRIDOR - DAY.

(NOVEMBER 2013)

Donny bursts out of the studio and answers the call.

DONNY Alright maaaatttteee! (beat) Yeah, yeah, it's great, really enjoying myself--(beat) Look, I'm actually in class right now, is there a better time to... (beat) What--?! Are you serious? DONNY (CONT'D) You want me to write with you--? (beat) I mean-- yes! A thousand yes's, mate--!

Keeley bursts out of the studio doors behind.

KEELEY Donny! What are you playing at--?! She's raging in there--!

DONNY I've got to go, but yes! Onehundred percent--

Donny hangs up the phone with a smile.

# 39 INT. DRAMA SCHOOL, LOCKER ROOM - DAY. (NOVEMBER 2013)

Donny and a concerned Keeley talk after class. Everyone filtering out around them as they grab their bags.

KEELEY You're staying at his house?! Is that, not a bit, weird--?

DONNY Why? Because he's gay?

KEELEY No. Because he's old.

DONNY It's fine. We hung out every day in Edinburgh and he didn't try it then, so why would he bother now--?

# 40 EXT. DARRIEN'S BLOCK, GROUND FLOOR - DAY. (NOVEMBER 2013)

A couple of days later. Donny buzzes the intercom: Darrien O'Connor. Then stands back. Taking in a surprisingly unimpressive block of flats.

# 41 INT. DARRIEN'S FLAT, FRONT DOOR - DAY. (NOVEMBER 2013)

Darrien answers his door to Donny in casual clothing.

DARRIEN Donnie Brasco--

DONNY Sinéad O'Connor.

Darrien smiles and offers a hug which lingers slightly.

### DARRIEN

Come in--

# 42 INT. DARRIEN'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM - DAY. (NOVEMBER 2013)

Donny walks into a quite comfortable and chic flat. A little underwhelming. But still nice with plants and relics and spiritual stuff all around the place.

> DONNY (V.O.) I am not sure what I expected, walking into Darrien's flat-- but I was taken aback by how surprisingly domestic it all was. (beat) I immediately felt an odd sort of peace there--

Donny suddenly spots a cat scratching about in the corner.

DONNY Oh, wow! You have a cat!

DARRIEN Fergus! We're very much in love.

DONNY Wow. I'm not surprised... (to the cat) You're a lovely little fella, aren't you Fergus--?

Donny strokes the cat smilingly which warms to him in return. Darrien sees them bonding and has a private smile to himself.

DARRIEN

Cup of tea?

DONNY Yeah! Please--

Donny follows him into the kitchen.

# 42A SCENE DELETED.

# 43 INT. DARRIEN'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM - DAY. (NOVEMBER 2013)

Donny and Darrien are sitting in the living room with cups of tea. Donny goes into his bag and takes out a bulky script.

DONNY So, I, uh-- I've actually written up some scenes and stuff, nothing major-- still needs a bit of work-- Donny hands it over. Darrien flicks through.

DARRIEN

Sixty pages?

DONNY Yeah, didn't take long.

Darrien gives him a disbelieving look, then returns to the script. Feeling slightly overwhelmed by the length of it all.

DARRIEN

I tell you what, why don't you give me the gist--? It will be a good lesson in pitching--

DONNY

Okay, well-- it's about this guy called Nigel-- a high-flying lawyer who decides at the age of fifty, to try his hand at professional wrestling--

DARRIEN That's quite niche.

DONNY

Is it--?

#### DARRIEN

Yeah, I mean-- who watches wrestling anymore, who is above the age of six--?

DONNY (bluffing) ... yeah, no... not me, anyway--

Donny tries to hide his embarrassment. Darrien smiles.

### DARRIEN

Continue.

### DONNY

Well, basically. He gets the bug and starts wrestling more and more and soon he is struggling to keep the balance between his two worlds. Turning up to court cases with black eyes-- or he's forgotten to take his make-up off-- and soon, Nigel has a choice to make--

Darrien already absolutely hates this idea.

DONNY Live his life as a lawyer. Or Hangman Harry, the mud-stomping, beer-swilling, bar-room brawler from Austin, Texas. (beat) Hangman Harry is his wrestling name.

Darrien stares. Mildly appalled. Then hands back the script.

DARRIEN Needs more work.

DONNY Oh. But you haven't read it?

DARRIEN I'll read it when you sell it to me-

Donny nods, disappointed.

DONNY I mean, I could sit in another room and try to--

DARRIEN Do you want to get high?

Donny looks taken aback by the question.

DONNY What? Here--?!

DARRIEN Yeah, why not? We can go out later and grab a drink-- it'll be like Edinburgh all over again--

DONNY

Uh... (uncertain) Yeah, sure--

Darrien gets up and opens a cupboard. He pulls out a slate with lines already on it and a straw. Donny looks nervous as his back is turned. But smiles when Darrien turns back.

Darrien hands the straw to Donny who hesitatingly sniffs a line and hands it back. Darrien smiles in a slightly odd, proud way. Before sniffing a line himself--

# 44 INT. DARRIEN'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT. (NOVEMBER 2013)

Later on. Donny is high as a kite. Darrien is spread out on the sofa next to him. Completely in his element.

DONNY Holy shit! You've worked with some comedy greats! What are they like?!

#### DARRIEN

Average--

### DONNY

You can't mean that, they're legends! Some of them are in my top six dinner-party guests, for sure! Have you ever played that game? Where you can invite anyone you want to your house for dinner, but you can only pick six--?!

#### DARRIEN

Ugh! Sounds horrible. My home is a sacred space-- it takes somebody very special to be allowed in--

Darrien smiles at Donny. Who is caught out slightly by the deepness of the answer. He decides to deflect.

DONNY

What, really?! That's a cop out answer! Come on, who would they be?

DARRIEN They wouldn't be celebrities. They would be leaders, gurus, the spiritually awake-- either that or me, around each place--

#### DONNY

Shit! Six of you at the one party! I couldn't imagine how many drugs there'd be--!

Darrien laughs. Pause.

#### DONNY

Fine, I'll tell you mine-- Gervais, Sacha Baron-Cohen, Julia Davis, Coogan, Prior, and, I dunno, Gandhi or someone-- because you need to look virtuous with these kinds of things--

Darrien laughs. Then sits up.

DARRIEN Do you want to get really high?

DONNY

Fuck yeah.

DARRIEN No, like, really high--?

DONNY

Fuck yeah!

Darrien smiles and gets up. As he goes, we stay on Donny, whose jaw is going haywire from all the cocaine. In amongst it all, we can see he is still not entirely comfortable--

DONNY What was their secret by the way?

DARRIEN What do you mean?

DONNY Like, what did they all do to get where they are today--?

DARRIEN They listened to me.

Donny laughs.

DARRIEN I'm serious. They threw themselves into everything I asked of them.

DONNY That's awesome!

Darrien turns and sits back down. He places some stuff on the table between them. A couple of shots of something and two small objects wrapped in rizla paper.

DARRIEN Here, come sit next to me--

Donny moves over next to him on the couch.

DONNY What's all this--?

DARRIEN This-- is a bomb of MDMA--

DONNY

Oh, I think I've heard of that. It's basically like a good pill, or a pure pill, or whatever-- right?

DARRIEN That's right, and this is GHB. It's a relaxant. It relaxes you--

Darrien hands the shot to Donny. Then raises his to cheers.

DARRIEN Trust me, you haven't experienced anything like it--

Donny stares at Darrien. Then raises up his shot to cheers.

DONNY I haven't experienced anything like you, that's for sure--!

Donny cheers back, then bombs the rizla, and downs the shot.

DONNY Fuck me, that's disgusting--

DARRIEN A little pain, for a little gain--

Darrien smiles, oddly proud. Then ruffles his hair. Donny smiles back. Infantile. Desperate to please.

# 45 INT. DARRIEN'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT. (NOVEMBER 2013)

Donny is lying back. Melting into the couch. Staring up at the ceiling. A new level of high. The grade becomes soft and he appears more innocent, almost--

DONNY (V.O.) The first time I came up was like nothing I had ever experienced. It felt like a beam of divine light shone down from space, through Darrien's roof and into his living room, exactly where I was sitting-as warm Indian Ocean waves passed up and down my body--

DARRIEN You've got a big future ahead, a very big future--

Donny lolls his head to the side and stares at Darrien, in complete drug-fuelled bliss. His eyes welling with euphoria.

DONNY (V.O.) -- and on that couch, Darrien spoke about my talents in the same vein as all my comedy heroes growing up-and with every sentence he said, and every drug I took, I started to believe it. Smell it. Taste it, even. That my dreams were quantifiable. That I could almost reach out and grasp them as they untangled before me-- Suddenly, Darrien flops his leg over Donny's leg. It takes Donny by surprise. As he lolls his head down to look.

> DARRIEN You don't mind, do you--?

> > DONNY

No...

Donny stares down for a few beats. When he sits up, suddenly.

DONNY

Oh shit.

# DARRIEN

-- what?

DONNY I think I'm going to puke!

Darrien takes his leg off and Donny gets up. He can barely walk as his body is so weak from all the intoxicants and so he wobbles himself down to his hands and knees. Woozy.

> DARRIEN Go to the bathroom--

DONNY I don't think-- I'll...

Donny crawls along the floor. Trying so hard to hold it. But knowing he cannot. When he spots a cat bowl nearby--

DARRIEN No! No! Not in the cat bowl--

Too late. Donny throws up violently into the cat bowl. A hell of a lot of very watery, weird-coloured puke.

DARRIEN Are you okay--?!

DONNY Shit! My eyes are burning!

DARRIEN Here, I'll pat your back--

Darrien fake-laughs, and flops himself down on the floor beside him. Patting his back as he vomits.

DONNY -- thank you, thank you-- I'm so sorry--

We see Darrien's hand move down Donny's back. Patting as he goes but soon turning into a rub. Donny carries on throwing up. Oblivious to how close Darrien's hand is to his backside.

# -- oh God-- I'm so sorry--

When, in one swift movement, Darrien's hand slides under the back of his waist band and he plunges his fingers up inside his arsehole. Molesting him there.

Even in amongst the vomiting, Donny reacts to it with pain. His face contorted and distressed. Not quite sure what is going on but wincing in silent agony.

We stay on Donny grimacing with deep discomfort. Completely conflicted. Darrien's fingers up inside him now. He lets it go on for about ten seconds when the pain becomes unbearable and Donny shouts from a deep-place--

DONNY

Stop!

Darrien stops immediately. He gets up and goes into the kitchen. Donny pulls himself up against the wall to catch his breath. But remains sitting on the floor. Covered in sick.

DARRIEN I'm sorry, that was unacceptable.

Darrien puts on the kettle and washes his hands in the sink. Donny stares at him traumatised.

> DARRIEN Will almond milk do--?

Donny nods. Darrien pours the tea and walks over with it.

#### DARRIEN

Here you go, that'll sort you out--

Darrien hands him the tea. Donny looks down at it, then looks back up at Darrien with tears in his eyes.

DONNY I'm really sorry about that--

Donny stares with glistening eyes. On the edge of crying.

DARRIEN It's okay. We'll go slower next time--

Darrien smiles. Then gets up. Leaving Donny on the floor.

46 SCENE DELETED.

47 SCENE DELETED.

DONNY (V.O.) I would love to pretend that's as far as it went--

# 49 INT. DRAMA SCHOOL, BATHROOM - DAY. (DECEMBER 2013)

Donny stares down at his phone. A look of deep worry as Darrien calls. When he answers. Putting on a front.

DONNY Hey mate, how's it going--? (beat) Yeah, yeah-- I'm good-- sorry, but can you be quick? I'm about to go into class--(beat) What, the channel have Hangman Harry...?! (beat) They love it! Oh my God--!

Donny pulls the phone away and does a little dance.

DONNY Oh, you want me to--? (beat) Yeah, yeah, yeah--(beat) No, no, that makes sense-- yeah--(beat) No, sure. I'll come--

Donny hangs up. Feeling unsure.

# 50 INT. DARRIEN'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM - DAY. (DECEMBER 2013)

Donny and Darrien are sitting, going through the script.

DONNY (V.O.) Darrien took me through everything the channel had said and I beamed from ear to ear as he spoke of series commissions-- and option periods-- and all these fabulous things I didn't understand-- that by the time he cracked out the drugs-- I had already said yes, in my mind--

Darrien places some drugs down on the table between them. Donny smiles. As he bombs a rizla and knocks back a shot.

# 51 INT. DARRIEN'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT. (DECEMBER 2013)

Donny and Darrien are high in the living room in the exact same position as last time. With Donny's head back on the couch and Darrien lying back his legs spread across him.

> DONNY I thought I'd blown it, you know--

> > DARRIEN

What?

DONNY This. When I threw up--

DARRIEN Oh, don't be silly! Would take a lot more than vomit for me to be put off by your talents...

Donny flops his head to the side to stare at Darrien. High as a kite. His eyes glisten with emotion.

DONNY Thank you. Thank you so much. If there's anything I can do--

DARRIEN Just keep dreaming.

DONNY Oh, that's easy...

Donny rolls his head back to face the ceiling.

DARRIEN You can't tell anyone by the way. About our way of working.

DONNY

No, sure--

DARRIEN

This is a very unique way of unlocking the creative process and there are too many shut down types who won't see what we do here as normal--

Donny stares up at the ceiling, processing this for a moment.

DONNY Well, fuck em--

Darrien smiles, appreciatively.

Some months later. A chalk board close up, with a line of cocaine on it. Donny sniffs it and sits back on the sofa.

DONNY (V.O.) When I finished acting school, I moved to London permanently-- and started taking drugs at Darrien's house almost every weekend--

Donny looks up to find Darrien holding a pipe. Explaining to Donny what he is about to take. Donny nods nervously.

DONNY (V.O.) I had fully drunk the kool aid of his promises. Of believing that success was right around the corner. That I would have my own show by thirty. A millionaire around the same time. All stuff he said to me, before he spoon-fed me the latest chemical--

DARRIEN You're going places-- you really, really are--

Darrien raises up the pipe and lights it. Donny stares. Full of nerves and dread. When he lowers his lips and inhales.

> DONNY (V.O.) I went from a guy who had smoked a bit of weed, to week long benders high on crack--

### 53 SCENE DELETED

52

54 INT. DARRIEN'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT. (AUGUST 2014)

Darrien holds up a different pipe. Donny inhales.

DONNY (V.O.) -- and meth--

55 INT. DARRIEN'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT. (OCTOBER 2014)

Darrien holds up a different pipe. Donny inhales.

DONNY (V.O.) -- and heroin--

Donny exhales an unbelievable amount of smoke from the pipe. His eyes glaze over almost instantly as ecstasy takes over. DONNY (V.O.)

-- and when you take enough drugs to feel that transcendental plane upon which all thought stops and euphoria begins-- talks of the future and plans and fame and happiness-- feel almost as real as the chemicals that flow through your blood and brain--

Donny falls slowly backwards to the floor. His eyes lolling around his head, as he judders on the ground. A weird smile creeps across his face as froth starts forming in his mouth.

> DONNY (V.O.) It was only a matter of time now-surely...

Donny's eyes slowly droop to a close. When, suddenly--

- 56 SCENE DELETED.
- 57 SCENE DELETED.
- 58 SCENE DELETED.
- 59 BLACK.

DONNY (V.O.) I passed out many times in his company--

# 60 INT. DARRIEN'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM - DAY. (JANUARY 2015)

Some months later. Donny's eyes open, blearily. He looks down. Darrien is groping him in the spooning position. Donny starts moving to get up. Darrien immediately gets off him.

> DONNY (V.O.) I would wake to find him lying next to me. Usually spooning me. Often groping me. Sometimes leaping to his feet with a guilty look on his face--

### 61 INT. DARRIEN'S FLAT, BATHROOM - DAY. (JANUARY 2015)

Donny walks into the bathroom, like a zombie.

DONNY (V.O.) Then I would stumble to the bathroom and find his putrid spit congealed around my genital area--

Donny puts his fingers in his pants and raises them up for closer inspection. Almost too high to properly take it in.

## 62 INT. LIZ'S HOUSE, DONNY'S ROOM - NIGHT. (MARCH 2015)

Donny frantically types away. Coughing horrendously. Stopping only to check the email from Darrien. Where we see the brutal tone of his notes: "This scene is crap. Full rewrite here!"

> DONNY (V.O.) Then every Monday he was back to his cold, callous self. Giving me brutal script notes and making me do overnight rewrites on a comedown for no money, while I coughed up my latest throat infection.

63 BLACK.

DONNY (V.O.) And still I went back--

# 64 INT. LIZ'S HOUSE, DONNY'S ROOM - NIGHT.

(JULY 2015)

Four months later. Donny is packing a bag. Keeley is on the bed, protesting. They are mid-conversation.

KEELEY What, you're not spending my birthday with me--?!

DONNY No, I'm going round Darrien's--

KEELEY

What the hell, Donny?! Is this not a bit strange to you--?

DONNY

I don't want to go away with your friends! I can't afford it--!

KEELEY So instead you're going to go to an old writer's house to take drugs--?

DONNY Look, I know it doesn't make sense to you-- but he's helping me with my career-- But, what's he done?! You've worked in a bar since you came to London! You do everything for him for free!

DONNY I don't have time for this conversation--

Donny grabs his bag and storms out the room.

### 65 SCENE DELETED.

## 66 INT. DARRIEN'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT. (JULY 2015)

Donny is opposite Darrien as he raises up two lollipops.

DONNY (V.O.) That night, Darrien presented me with acid--

DARRIEN I will take half of one and you take one and a half. I will act as your guide, so you feel safe--

Donny nods, trying to hide his anxiety. Before popping the lollipop in his mouth. Darrien smiles and ruffles his hair.

### 67 INT. DARRIEN'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT. (JULY 2015)

Donny sits on the couch. Gradually coming up. While Darrien sorts out some music from a stereo at the side.

DARRIEN The trick is to let the music take you where it wants to--

Donny nods, unsure. When Darrien clicks play. Intense, Amazonian dance music thuds through the flat. Darrien dims the lights and then smiles at Donny. Who smiles back, uneasy.

Darrien then turns and starts dancing an odd Amazonian jig in front of him. Donny stares. Weirded out by it all and we sit inside the awkwardness of it all for a while.

> DONNY (V.O.) I sometimes think back to this image-- me, mid-twenties-- sitting high as a kite, watching this fiftyfive year old man dancing an odd Amazonian jig in front of me, when somebody asks me the question--(beat) "How did you get into comedy--?"

Darrien shouts out, in the middle of dancing.

DARRIEN Keep telling me what you're seeing--

DONNY Shimmering colours, the outline of something--

DARRIEN So I'm a phoenix, right now? Is that what you're seeing--?!

Donny sits up. Suddenly aware that he is tripping.

DARRIEN It's important you see me as something strong, a phoenix-- a knight--

Donny startles as his eyes take hold of more tripping.

DARRIEN How about one of those wrestlers you like--?

Suddenly, Donny sits bolt upright as a thought enters his mind. Time suspending as we stay tight on him. As he desperately tries to process his panic. His eyes wild.

DONNY (V.O.) Suddenly-- seemingly from nowhere-this clear, strong thought entered my head. "He's trying to control your mind--"

This thought registers like a bolt of lightening. Darrien sees him suddenly perturbed and stops dancing.

DARRIEN ... what's wrong--?

Donny does not respond. Lost in the strength of the thought.

DONNY (V.O.) It was the purest thought I had ever had, and it pummelled through me like a clarion in the darkness. (beat) This man is wrong. This situation is wrong. Get out. Now.

Donny shoots to his feet. Screaming from a deep place.

DONNY

FFFFUCK!!!

Donny starts having a panic attack, as Darrien rushes over.

DARRIEN What's wrong--?!

DONNY I'm going blind! All I can see is white!

DARRIEN It's fine! It's rebirth!

DONNY I can't see! I can't fucking see!

DARRIEN Don't worry! You're safe with me!

Donny pushes him away and sprints out of the room.

### 68 INT. DARRIEN'S FLAT, HALLWAY - NIGHT. (JULY 2015)

Donny runs through the corridor. Knocking things as he goes.

DONNY (V.O.) My subconscious, that I had been repressing this entire time, had reared its head to shine the most obvious light on a fucked up situation--

### 69 INT. DARRIEN'S FLAT, FRONT DOOR - NIGHT. (JULY 2015)

Donny gets to the front door. But stops suddenly. There are no handles. Just thick, red paint covering everywhere.

Donny, panicking, runs his hand down the door in the hope of finding the lock when he grabs something. But he struggles to turn the lock because he cannot see it. And as he looks down, he notices his forearm has blended into the red of the door.

Oh shit! Donny gets a fright and jumps back. He studies his arm, as it remains a weird red colour, when he turns to find--Darrien there. His eyes black. Donny jumps out of his skin.

DARRIEN What's happening to you--?!

DONNY This is bad! I'm being told this is bad!

DARRIEN That's the paranoia you need to fight against--!

DONNY Turn the music off! DARRIEN It's off! It's off!

DONNY

FFFFUCK!!!

DARRIEN Here, here-- have this, it will take the edge off.

Darrien hands him a shot. Slightly different to what we have seen them take before. But a distressed Donny knocks it back.

DONNY

Fuck!!!

Donny coughs. Recoiling in disgust. When Darrien cups his hand over his mouth to keep the liquid in.

DARRIEN No! Don't! Try to keep it in..

Darrien has his hand over Donny's mouth. Trying to give him a reassuring look. Donny stares at him with frightened eyes.

DARRIEN Swallow, swallow...

Donny calms down a little in his gaze. Then swallows.

DARRIEN Good, that's good-- it'll help...

Darrien takes his hand away from his mouth. Donny stands there. Almost like he can feel the strength of the liquid travelling through his body. He starts to grow panicky.

DONNY

Oh God...

DARRIEN

What?

DONNY That was strong!

DARRIEN What do you mean?

DONNY THAT WAS STRONG! THAT WAS STRONG!

Donny starts freaking out.

DARRIEN What is it?!

DONNY FFFFUCK!!! FUCK!!! FUCK!!!

DARRIEN It's okay, it will be okay--

Darrien grabs him and moves him down on the couch behind. Donny is absolutely freaking out now. As Darrien reaches out and starts rubbing his chest in a bid to settle him.

> DARRIEN Breathe into my hand! Breathe--!

Donny starts breathing into his hand, and mimicking Darrien's breath as they hold eye contact.

DARRIEN This is part of it. It's all part of it--

Darrien's rubbing soon slows down and becomes sexual. As Donny starts to slumber. Not entirely sure what is happening. When Darrien lifts up his shirt and kisses around his belly.

DONNY

No-- no...

DARRIEN It's fine, it'll help bring you back to body--

Donny's body starts weakening. He tries to pull himself up the couch. But he is too weak to fight what is happening.

DONNY

Fff.. ffck...

DARRIEN Sh-shh! Relax, relax...

Donny's energy is fading fast. His body starts to lose its energy and his eyelids start to droop.

DONNY

No... no...

DARRIEN Shh-sh! It's fine! It's fine!

Donny starts to pass out as Darrien starts trying to undo the string on his joggers. But he struggles with the knot.

DONNY

I...

Darrien gives up on the knot and starts yanking his trousers down. Just as darkness overwhelms the frame. When, suddenly--

### 70 BLACK.

Silence. Just for a moment. When--

#### 71 INT. DARRIEN'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT. (JULY 2015)

BOOM! Donny wakes. Gasping for air. Darrien is naked from the waist down now and between his legs. As the Cranberries' 'Dreams' plays. This time, distorted and weird. Abject chaos everywhere. The music. The tripping. The horror.

# DONNY

Please! I...

### DARRIEN You're resisting too much! Let the drug take you where it wants to go!

Darrien tries again. But fails again. So he spits on his hands and starts shoving his fingers inside him instead. Donny winces in agony. His face contorted but his body limp.

# DARRIEN Just untense yourself! Untense!

Donny is fighting hard but he is almost completely passed out now. His body is no longer able to fight. We stay on Donny's face as he looks down. Through the blur of his eyesight he focuses on something and frowns ever-so-slightly.

DONNY (V.O.) The last thought I remember having, was -- "He's barely erect! What is he getting from it, if he's barely erect?!"-- as darkness clouded my peripheries for a final time--

72 BLACK.

# DONNY (V.O.) -- and I passed out completely--

The Cranberries' 'Dreams' final refrain plays out over black. The hallowed sound of the singers howling and howling as the song slowly fades in the background. Leaving us with nothing but a crushing silence at the end of it all.

#### 73 INT. PARENTS HOUSE, DONNY'S ROOM - DAY. (JULY 2000)

We stay on black for a few moments, when we hear the rustling of a camera being set up on a tripod. Soon it clicks on and we open frame on a random chair, as the lens catches focus.

Soon we see YOUNG DONNY (10) enter the frame and sit in a chair, dressed in a ridiculous cowboy outfit.

YOUNG DONNY Hello, my name is Donny Dunn and when I grow up I want to be a world famous comedian. Here is my first character-- Jonny Knucks--(Southern American) "Hello! I'm Jonny Knucks--"

## 74 INT. DARRIEN'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM - DAY. (JULY 2015)

Donny wakes up worse for wear. He looks down at himself. He is wearing different trousers. The place is oddly clean.

DONNY (V.O.) I don't even remember thinking. I don't even remember having thoughts. Just that his statues and spiritual relics, now, in the cold light of day, looked tacky. Bought. Almost like the faces had turned to scowls and the air around them had thickened with a creepiness--

Darrien walks into the room with rubber gloves on.

DARRIEN How did you find it--?

Donny stares, not knowing how to answer. Still high. Still processing. His eyes wild, and traumatised. Darrien smiles.

DARRIEN You should shower. A wash and some warm water will do you good--

# 75 INT. DARRIEN'S FLAT, BATHROOM - DAY. (JULY 2015)

Donny takes off his clothes in the bathroom. He reaches out a shaking hand and tests the water of the shower and watches as it trickles down his arms. Glistening. He stands there, mesmerised. Smiling, almost, through tears.

Donny gets in the shower. He dangles his head under first, letting the water fall around his head. But the second he submerges himself fully, the water stings his backside and he steps back out. Silently wincing, as to not be heard.

He perches himself down on the side of the bath instead, and has a very silent, very painful, guttural sob to himself. When there is a knock at the door--

# DARRIEN

Can I come in--?

Donny gets up and opens the door. Darrien is holding a big, gigantic towel open for Donny to wrap himself in.

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\*

Donny just bursts out crying and falls into the towel. Darrien wraps it around him and cradles him, as he sobs.

76 BLACK.

DONNY (V.O.) I would love to say I left. That I stormed out and never went back-but I stayed for days afterwards. (beat) In fact, come the 6th of July-- I cried on the couch and told him I didn't feel safe and he apologised like he always did, and told me it would never happen again --(beat) On July 7th, I got an eye infection and lay on his floor while he bathed it in salt water ---(beat) On July 8th, I fed his cat while he took phone calls. (beat) On July 9th, he cooked me tofu and rice. (beat) On July 10th, I finally went home-

### 77 INT. LIZ'S HOUSE, DONNY'S ROOM - DAY.

Donny is doubled over in his room. He looks utterly dreadful. Sweating. Yellow. Manic.

> DONNY (V.O.) I didn't shower or shit for days afterwards. In the dark prism of my denial, I figured that if I did it and felt pain-- then I couldn't carry on convincing myself that nothing had happened--(beat) Somehow denying the truth felt easier--

### 78 SCENE DELETED

79 INT. LIZ'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - DAY. (JULY 2015)

Donny is crawling along the floor to the toilet.

(JULY 2015)

DONNY (V.O.) Days went by and my stomach started to ache and I started to sweat and hallucinate and throw up blood and bile-- and still then I felt like I would rather vomit that up than the truth--

Donny throws up violently inside the toilet.

DONNY (V.O.) -- and so eventually, after about a week of feeling like an ulcer was filling out my stomach, I concocted a plan--

### 80 INT. LIZ'S HOUSE, DONNY'S ROOM - NIGHT. (JULY 2015)

Donny drops a supermarket carrier bag down on the desk in his room. It is full of rolls of cling-film.

# 81 INT. LIZ'S HOUSE, DONNY'S ROOM - NIGHT. (JULY 2015)

Donny wraps his mattress in cling film. Quite literally covering the whole of it. He then re-applies the bedsheet and smooths it down as best as he can.

### 82 INT. LIZ'S HOUSE, DONNY'S ROOM - NIGHT. (JULY 2015)

Donny pulls out a bottle of laxatives from his side table. He pours a pile into his hand and swallows them. He then pulls out a packet of Valium and swallows down a few with water.

### 83 BLACK.

DONNY (V.O.) I slept eighteen hours that night-

### 84 INT. LIZ'S HOUSE, DONNY'S ROOM - DAY. (JULY 2015)

Donny wakes. He pulls back the covers to find they are absolutely caked in shit. He stares down at himself with disgust. Then gets out of bed.

### 85 EXT. LIZ'S HOUSE, FRONT GARDEN - DAY. (JULY 2015)

Donny puts the bin-bag, filled with the shitty bed covers and cling film in the bin. Then looks back at Liz's lovely, quaint home. Feeling the unbelievable pain of things. DONNY (V.O.) What bothered me most was the not knowing--

### 86 EXT. LIZ'S HOUSE, STREET - DAY. (JULY 2015)

Donny waits on curb. Some flowers in his hands. Tears in his \* eyes as he waits on something. Anxiously. \*

DONNY (V.O.) The questions that reared their head at the worst possible times--

Suddenly a taxi pulls up. Out of which Keeley appears. She \* looks at him with daggers. Still clearly annoyed at him. But \* then she registers him crying and softens slightly. \*

Against her impulses she walks up to him and gently hugs him. \* Donny does his best to hide his tears behind her back. But \* fails and so Keeley looks at him. Stirring him gently. \*

> KEELEY Hey! What's going on with you--?

DONNY	
No, nothing I	just
(beat)	
feel bad for	how we left things.

KEELEY Oh, come here, silly--

Keeley pulls him into another hug. Donny is still deeply \* upset as he holds Keeley tightly in his arms and clings on. \*

## 87 INT. LIZ'S HOUSE, DONNY'S ROOM - NIGHT. (JULY 2015)

The next day. Keeley and Donny flop onto the bed. Keeley starts kissing his neck but Donny is finding it difficult.

DONNY (V.O.) What happened all those moments I passed out? Did he ever believe in me or was this whole thing some preplanned manipulation? Was he sober the entire time--?

Keeley pulls away.

KEELEY Are you okay--?

DONNY Yeah, yeah... I'm fine...

Keeley smiles and goes back to kissing his neck.

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DONNY (V.O.) Why wasn't he erect? Yet so desperate to keep going? Was it simply a desire to corrupt? To achieve whatever his sick mind wanted to achieve? Was that the turn on? To ruin my life--?

Donny sits up. Breaking their intimacy.

DONNY Do you want to watch something instead? I'm not feeling it--

### KEELEY

No, shut up--

Keeley pushes him down and starts kissing him again. But Donny sits back up again. Breaking their intimacy. DONNY I'm sorry, it's just-- not happening today--

KEELEY It didn't happen yesterday either--

DONNY Well, maybe, I just need to take a break from it all then, okay?

Donny snaps slightly. Keeley looks taken aback.

KEELEY What, from sex, or from me--?

Donny hesitates. Keeley sees this, and--

KEELEY Wow. Okay. Wow...

Keeley gets up and storms out. Donny closes his eyes, pained.

### 88 EXT. LONDON, STREET - DAY.

Donny walks down the street. Paranoid. Edgy.

DONNY (V.O.) Without Keeley, I became suicidal. The last bastion of light and love in my life had left-- so now all I had to do was stare into the gulf of what happened--

## 89 INT. LONDON UNDERGROUND, TUBE - DAY. (JULY 2015)

Donny sits behind a nice-looking man. Conflicted. Confused. He tries not to look at him. But his eye is invariably drawn.

> DONNY (V.O.) I started to feel this overwhelming sexual confusion crashing through my body. Like, because this crime was committed by a man-- I must now, in fact, be gay--

The man suddenly looks up, so Donny quickly stands and moves away. Waiting by the doors. When he looks back. Catching eyes with the man again who is frowning ambivalently at him.

> DONNY (V.O.) It felt ludicrous-- I had never been with someone of the same sex-but it was an insecurity that grew into a raging madness within me--

(JULY 2015)

#### 90 SCENE DELETED.

#### EXT. LONDON, STREET - DAY. 91

Donny walks down the street with his hood up. Peeking out. Trying to hide his face from everyone as they pass.

> DONNY (V.O.) I would go down the street and feel like everyone who looked at me, could see what had happened. Like they were peering into my soul. Seeing the rape and the doubts and the confusion --

#### 92 INT. LIZ'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - NIGHT. (AUGUST 2015)

Donny is brushing his teeth in the sink. Aggressively.

DONNY (V.O.) I was sometimes so angry that I could taste hate in my teeth. Like my gums were covered in this detestable sludge, I just couldn't scrub away--

Donny spots a nail clipper by the sink. He picks it up.

### INT. LIZ'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - NIGHT. 93

Moments later. Donny sits on the toilet. Jamming the pointed file on the clipper underneath his fingernail. Drawing blood.

> DONNY (V.O.) I would dream of killing him. Chopping his tongue out or his cock off-- whichever had done me the most damage -- and burning his body into the ground--

94 BLACK.

> DONNY (V.O.) So after months of hate and anger and repression and confusion, I was left with no choice --

#### 95 INT. LIZ'S HOUSE, DONNY'S ROOM - NIGHT. (AUGUST 2015)

Donny opens his laptop and clicks on some gay porn. He has an extremely self-hating, yet somehow successful orgasm. He closes his laptop straight away afterwards.

(AUGUST 2015)

(AUGUST 2015)

Donny gets up and throws the laptop in the cupboard.

### 96 INT. LIZ'S HOUSE, DONNY'S ROOM - NIGHT. (AUGUST 2015)

Donny opens the cupboard and takes the laptop back out. Loading up the porn again. A self-hating look on his face.

> DONNY (V.O.) Every day the laptop called me to it. The keys, like grizzled teeth, beckoning me towards them. I felt confused. I felt angry. I felt like I was going through puberty all over again--

### 97 INT. LIZ'S HOUSE, DONNY'S ROOM - NIGHT. (AUGUST 2015)

Donny is awake, staring at the ceiling.

DONNY (V.O.) I would lie awake at night and question how much of this was down to him and how much of it was a feeling that was already lurking within me-- like, did it happen to me because I was giving off some vibe I wasn't aware of? Or did it make me have these feelings?

### 98 INT. LIZ'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - NIGHT.

(AUGUST 2015)

Donny looks at himself in the mirror. Gaunt. Frail. Tears in his eyes. Barely recognising himself as he stares.

DONNY (V.O.) -- and no matter what rationale I landed on, it still ate me up worse than before-- because this is what he wanted-- this is what he saw in me all along... and then, a feeling so bitter I could almost catch it in my throat--

99 BLACK.

DONNY (V.O.) That he had been vindicated somehow-

## 100 INT. SEX CLUB, SMALL ROOM - NIGHT

BOOM! Donny bursts into a sex club side room. Him and a random man get down to it with a frantic, animalistic energy.

DONNY (V.O.) I started having reckless sex with people of all genders, in the most fucked up scenarios-- in this desperate pursuit of the truth--

# 100A INT. SEX CLUB, SMALL ROOM - NIGHT (AUGUST 2015) A quick flash. Donny having sex with a woman.

100B INT. SEX CLUB, SMALL ROOM - NIGHT. (AUGUST 2015)

A quick flash. Donny is having sex with another man.

### 101 SCENE DELETED.

### 102 INT. SEX CLUB, CORRIDOR - NIGHT. (SEPTEMBER 2015)

Donny walks through a grizzly sex club corridor. Various edgylooking men and women sit eyeballing him as he passes.

> DONNY (V.O.) I would put myself in these terrifying situations where I would almost risk being raped again in this odd pursuit of discovery over the first time--

### 103 INT. SEX CLUB, SMALL ROOM - NIGHT. (SEPTEMBER 2015)

Donny is getting shagged by a muscly steroidal man. His face is anguished. Clearly in pain. It is deeply dark and disturbing. As though Donny is wilfully getting raped again.

> DONNY (V.O.) I sometimes questioned if my life would be simpler if I just had total disregard for my body in every single sense of the word--

# 104 INT. BUS, UPPER DECK - NIGHT. (SEPTEMBER 2015)

Donny leans against the window. Tearful and self-hating.

# 51.

(AUGUST 2015)

man.

DONNY (V.O.) Like if I am passed around like a fucking whore, then I might at least shed this idea that my body is part of me, somehow--(beat) Like who cares if it happened the first time-- it has now happened a ton of times so what does it matter...?

### 104A **BLACK.**

DONNY (V.O.) But it mattered... (beat) It mattered because he took my confidence to go out and chase the world away from me--

# 105 INT. COCKTAIL BAR, MAIN AREA - NIGHT. (SEPTEMBER 2015)

Donny stands to greet a cis-woman. They shake hands and both sit down. The atmosphere very tense and nervous.

DONNY (V.O.) Dates and relationships by the dozen-- all of which started off in the gutter of what happened--

### 106 INT. COCKTAIL BAR, MAIN AREA - NIGHT. (SEPTEMBER 2015)

Donny sits opposite a man this time. Again, not listening. Again, lost in his thoughts as they talk at him.

DONNY (V.O.) I wasn't interested in love-- I had no capacity for it anymore--

### 107 INT. COCKTAIL BAR, MAIN AREA - NIGHT. (SEPTEMBER 2015)

Donny sits opposite a trans woman this time. Again, miles away. Not fully listening as she talks.

DONNY (V.O.) I just wanted these people to provide fucking answers--

- 108 SCENE DELETED.
- 109 SCENE DELETED.

### 110 SCENE DELETED.

### 111 INT. COCKTAIL BAR, CORRIDORS - NIGHT. (SEPTEMBER 2015)

Donny walks with pace down the corridor. Escaping from the bar. On the verge of a full-blown panic attack.

DONNY (V.O.) -- as I spurned and alienated every single one of them--

Donny crashes through the doors to the outside --

# 112 BLACK.

DONNY (V.O.) Until I met--

### 113 INT. COCKTAIL BAR, TABLE - NIGHT. (OC

(OCTOBER 2015)

Teri sits down at the table opposite Donny.

TERI You're cuter in person, than you are online..

Donny laughs bashfully. Then smiles at her.

DONNY (V.O.) I mean, she was everything I wanted. Everything I needed. Smart. Funny. Confident. Strong--

Teri laughs and takes his hand. Snapping us into--

### 114 INT. LGBTQIA+ CLUB, MAIN BAR - NIGHT. (NOVEMBER 2015)

A repeat of Episode Two, Scene 40. Teri sitting opposite Donny. Staring at him smoulderingly.

TERI Come back with me tonight--

Donny nods, apprehensively. Teri takes his hand.

DONNY (V.O.) But with every hand hold-- or lingering piece of eye contact, came a crushing sense of anger and shame-- that I was falling in love with her-- that I couldn't hide in anonymity anymore--

# Just don't tell Tony...

Teri smiles, then stands up. We stay on Donny, panic growing.

### 115 BLACK.

DONNY (V.O.) -- and perhaps most bitter of all-that I might not feel this way, if he hadn't done what he did--

- 116 SCENE DELETED.
- 117 SCENE DELETED.
- 118 SCENE DELETED.
- 119 SCENE DELETED.
- 120 SCENE DELETED.
- 121 SCENE DELETED.
- 122 SCENE DELETED.

### 123 INT. THE HEART, MAIN AREA - NIGHT. (AUGUST 2015)

Lock-in time. Close up on Donny. Sitting at the table. Full of melancholy as he stares out ahead. Numb. Paralysed. In slow motion. Stuck in time. Out of body and inside mind.

DONNY (V.O.) The dream had died-- I went from a comedian who worked in a bar, to a barman who worked as a comedian--

We see what Donny sees. He watches the lock-in. Everyone laughing and joking and clapping in slow motion as Gino tries to slap his balls in Greggsy's face.

> DONNY (V.O.) Now I was stuck. Surrounded by pilsner misogynists so heteronormative I could do nothing but crave their approval--

Donny looks down for a moment. Full of contemplation.

DONNY (V.O.) Am I gay? Straight? Something in between--? That's the thing when you doubt yourself. You feel like everyone knows. Like they're waiting to catch you out. Like your eyes are clear glass windows onto the most tightly held secret of your life--

Donny looks back up to see they are all staring at him. When--

### 124 SCENE DELETED.

125 **BLACK.** 

## DONNY (V.O.) -- but when Martha turned up--

### 126 INT. THE HEART, MAIN BAR - DAY.

A repeat of Episode One, Scene 15. The door shoots open and Martha stands in the doorway. Fixing him with an adoring stare and a flirtatious smile. As though suspended in time.

> DONNY (V.O.) -- all those confusions faded--

### 127 INT. THE HEART, MAIN BAR - NIGHT.

A repeat of Episode One, Scene 23. Martha sitting at the bar. Very much monologuing at him.

DONNY (V.O.) -- as she reached seemingly without effort into the darkest pockets of my insecurity and turned them to light---

MARTHA -- it should be illegal to have your bone structure too, you know-they should tax you for it-- man tax--!

DONNY (V.O.) Martha saw me the way I wanted to be seen--

Martha giggles up at him. Donny smiles back. Drawn in.

(SEPTEMBER 2015)

(AUGUST 2015)

DONNY (V.O.) So when it came to the point of going to the police-- I just couldn't stand the irony of reporting her but not him--

- 128 SCENE DELETED.
- 129 SCENE DELETED.
- 130 SCENE DELETED.
- 131 SCENE DELETED.

### 132 INT. POLICE STATION, MAIN RECEPTION - DAY. (JANUARY 2016)

A repeat of Scene 2. Donny entering the station. The door clanging shut. Daniels's unwelcoming stare. Him walking up to the front desk. Slowly. Nerves mounting.

DONNY (V.O.) There was always a sense that she was ill, that she couldn't help it--whereas he was a pernicious, manipulative groomer. To admit to her was to admit to him, and I hadn't admitted him to anyone yet--

### 133 **BLACK.**

DONNY (V.O.) Martha was woven into the fabric of my deepest secrets. Wielding this control over me that even she wasn't aware she had. (beat) So when the policeman asked--

# 134 INT. POLICE STATION, MAIN RECEPTION - DAY. (JANUARY 2016)

Back to present. As we were. Daniels asking Donny--

DANIELS Why did it take you so long to report it--?

Donny looks down. Thinking. Then looks back up at him. For a moment it looks like he is going to explode forth with everything. His eyes filling with tears. When, suddenly--

DONNY I don't know...

Donny looks down at his feet, ashamed. Daniels nods.

DANIELS Go home, look through her emails-and when you find something of significance, come back. Don't engage with her and don't let her get your phone number. Until then, we can't stop her getting public transport--(beat) Even at the end of your road--

Daniels presses a button which unlocks the door behind.

DONNY (V.O.) And just like that--(beat) It was over. \*

\*